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DEPARTMENT FOR EAP, EAP/J, EAP/K AND EAP/CM

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TAGS: [PREL](#) [CH](#) [KN](#) [JA](#)

SUBJECT: MFA ON DAI - YACHI MEETINGS IN JAPAN

REF: A. TOKYO 00775

[1](#)B. BEIJING 02461

Classified By: Political External Chief Edgard Kagan.
Reasons 1.4 (b) and (d).

Summary

[1](#)1. (C) China will not change its policy of friendship towards Japan nor its opposition to visits by Japan's leaders to Yasukuni Shrine, EVFM Dai Bingguo told VFM Shotaro Yachi during the fourth session of their Comprehensive Policy Dialogue. According to the MFA Japan Division Director, Yachi called the Sino-China relationship one of the most important in the world, while defending Prime Minister Koizumi's visits to the Yasukuni Shrine. Japan wants to quickly begin joint historical research, to which China agrees in principle but also wants the interest of South Korea and the United States to participate taken into account. The Japanese Embassy Political Counselor said serious discussions occurred late in the evening on February 11 at a hot springs resort in Niigata, after a visit to a bathhouse and a karaoke session, when Dai pressed Yachi on whether Japan wants China as a friend and partner or strategic rival. End Summary.

[1](#)2. (C) On February 17 newly-appointed MFA Asian Affairs Department Japan Division Director Hong Xiaoyong briefed poloffs on EVFM Dai Bingguo's February 10 - 11 meetings with VFM Shotaro Yachi for the fourth round of the Comprehensive Policy Dialogue, which took place in Tokyo and central Japan's Niigata Prefecture. Dai also met with more than ten other Japanese officials during his February 9 - 13 trip, including Chief Cabinet Secretary Abe, FM Aso, Finance Minister Tanigaki, Minister of Economy, Trade and Industry Nikai, Director of the Japan Defense Agency Nukaga and Chairman of the Lower House Kono. Commenting that the MFA normally does not brief Embassies on the Dai-Yachi Dialogue, Hong said he was specifically instructed by Dai to brief the U.S. Embassy in keeping with the spirit of his dialogue with the Deputy Secretary. Hong then proceeded to read from notes limited to Yasukuni Shrine, Taiwan and joint historical research.

Yasukuni Shrine

[1](#)3. (C) Calling the talks "candid and straightforward," Hong said Dai made clear to Yachi that while China's policy of friendship towards Japan would not change, China would also not change its stance of opposing

visits by Japan's leader to the Yasukuni Shrine. China has made many efforts to improve bilateral relations, but Japan's leaders need to stop visiting Yasukuni Shrine to break the impasse and prevent further harm to relations. Dai complained that the history museum at Yasukuni Shrine whitewashes Japan's aggression, something that neither China nor the international community can accept. Hong said that other Japanese politicians told Dai that they oppose PM Koizumi's visit to the shrine, but that PM Koizumi acts without regard to the views of others on this issue.

14. (C) According to Hong, Yachi responded that the Sino-Japan relationship is one of the most important bilateral relationships in the world. Yachi also defended PM Koizumi's visits to Yasukuni Shrine by calling it a private matter and hoping that the current political problems would not affect the bilateral relationship in other areas, like economics. Yachi responded to Dai's comments about the museum by saying "he had not been to the museum and did not know the current situation," according to Hong.

Taiwan

15. (C) On Taiwan, Hong said Dai repeated China's consistent stance that Japan should continue to adhere to the joint Japan-China documents on Taiwan and oppose Taiwanese independence. Dai also said China opposes Japan allowing Lee Deng-hui to visit Japan. Hong said Dai raised Beijing's concerns about the February 2005 Two Plus Two statement, though he

BEIJING 00002981 002 OF 002

commented that this was not a major point in the discussion.

Joint Historical Research Project

16. (C) Yachi told Dai that Japan wants to quickly begin joint historical research by experts and academics with China. Dai said China agreed in principle, while noting that both the ROK and the United States have expressed an interest in participating in such discussions. Hong said there were no detailed discussions on timing or content.

Japanese Embassy Comments

17. (C) Japanese Embassy Political Counselor Kazuhiro Suzuki told poloff separately on February 17 that Dai and Yachi met at a hot springs resort in Niigata on February 11. Following visits to the baths, dinner and karaoke sessions, Dai and Yachi got down to some "serious" discussions that lasted late into the night. Dai asked if Japan wants China as a friend and partner or strategic rival. Saying Yachi responded with the former, Suzuki suggested that Dai needed to bring home an answer ahead of internal Chinese government discussions on Japan prior to the March meeting of the National People's Congress. While encouraging Japan to take positive action to break the stalemate in relations, Dai said a visit by a Japanese PM under "any modality" is unacceptable.

18. (C) Suzuki said that in addition to agreeing to resume talks on the East China Sea in early March, the two sides agreed to resume Director General-level meetings on the UN and Africa and to make efforts to expand cultural and educational exchanges. Suzuki reported that China is satisfied with the results of Dai's discussions in Japan and that meetings this week

indicate that Beijing researchers and academics are already able to be a little more positive when discussing Japan.

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